

**Testimony of  
Mary Glassman  
Manager, CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies  
Before the Planning and Development Committee  
March 11, 2016**

**Re: HB 5602 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALISM  
HB 5603 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Co-Chairs Sen. Catherine A. Osten, Rep. Philip J. Miller and members of the Planning and Development Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding two bills before the Planning and Development Committee which foster regional cooperation among towns and schools.

My name is Mary Glassman and I am the Manager of the CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies, and I serve on Speaker Sharkey's Municipal Opportunities for Regional Efficiencies (MORE) Commission. CREC is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year as a regional education service center (RESC) and has a rich history of helping towns and schools save money through cooperative services. The primary focus of the CREC Office for Regional Efficiencies is to help identify efficiencies in non-instructional areas and to reinvest resources into teaching and learning without increasing the bottom-line.

These two bills before the Planning and Development Committee help assist towns and cities in working together.

**HB 5602 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALISM** – CREC strongly supports this bill which will enable municipalities to purchase through contracts that have been solicited and vetted by regional educational service centers or regional councils of government (COGs). Given the current state of the economy, saving money and preserving budgets is of utmost importance, and these programs have proven to help towns and schools do just that. By pooling the potential spend of school districts and municipalities, and by going through a competitive bidding process, vendors are willing to offer deeper discounts than an individual municipality would be able to obtain on their own.

The language in this bill will clarify that towns and schools can utilize cooperative purchasing programs through the statutorily created member organizations of RESCs and COGs, and will eliminate any confusion as to whether such bids can be used for state grant projects. The bill will lead to further opportunities for towns and schools to work together and to save money.

**HB 5603 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL TECHNOLOGY** – CREC supports the part of this bill which requires consideration of the application and use of technology to enhance efficiencies; foster collaboration; increase transparency and access to information; and reduce costs, in local, regional and state-wide plans of conservation and development. The use of technology would enable information to be readily available and would be of tremendous benefit to towns and schools, particularly as to data trends.

OFFICE FOR REGIONAL EFFICIENCIES  
Mary Glassman, *Manager*

However, CREC does not support the elimination of the regional performance incentive program grants to municipalities for the purpose of connecting to the Nutmeg Network. Strong connections between towns and schools are necessary in order to gain efficiencies and increase savings by sharing data and technology applications on a high speed and secure network.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We would be happy to answer any questions.